

KINGS COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES DIVISION



DIVISION EMERGENCY DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

“The purpose of this emergency disaster response plan is to ensure the safety and well-being of children under the care and supervision of the Agency during an environmental disaster.”

KINGS COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES DIVISION'S EMERGENCY DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

During any emergency disaster, the Kings County Human Services Agency/Child Protective Services Division will be responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of the children under its care, custody and control, as well as other children identified as “unaccompanied minors” who may be without parents, guardians or responsible relatives during the disaster and/or as a result of it.

Throughout the disaster, the Kings County Human Services Agency will deploy CPS staff to provide a variety of services to the aforementioned children to include, but not be limited to the following:

- CPS staff shall be assigned to designated Red Cross shelters to process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors, as well as make efforts to reunify said children with their parents, legal guardians or responsible relatives in accordance with regulations and legislation governing child welfare practice, if needed.
- CPS staff shall be assigned to designated Red Cross shelters and/or be available for 24 hour, 7 day emergency standby to conduct child abuse and neglect referral investigations as reported to the CPS hotline and/or on behalf of families temporarily located in the shelters, if needed. CPS staff located at the shelters shall accept Suspected Child Abuse Reports (SCARs) and respond in accordance with legislation, regulations and Agency policies dictating child welfare practice.
- CPS staff shall provide pre-placement preventative services and/or foster care placement services, as needed, and as regulated by current legislation, regulations and Agency policies guiding child welfare practice.
- CPS staff shall ensure ongoing case management duties are fulfilled on behalf of all dependent children and their families as applicable to current legislation, regulations and Agency policies guiding child welfare practice.
- CPS staff will make all reasonable efforts to provide supportive services to all children under its care, custody and control, those under its temporary care and supervision and the children’s careproviders during the disaster.
- CPS staff will respond to emergencies with other emergency personnel as requested and as applicable to their roles and duties (i.e. law enforcement, Probation, Parole, Fire).

State Mandated Duties

During or after a disaster, the Agency is not absolved from any of its State mandated tasks; however, Government Code Section 8567 allows for the Governor to make, amend and rescind State regulations if necessary. The Agency can submit a request to the Governor through the Board of Supervisors to suspend Agency State mandated tasks (i.e. responding the child abuse referrals). If the Board of Supervisors concurs, the request would be signed and forwarded to the Governor.

CPS Employee Duty Coverage Procedures:

1. Whether the disaster occurs when employees are on or off duty:
 - a. CPS personnel shall, upon learning of the disaster, contact their regularly assigned Program Manager for emergency response assignments. Personnel shall immediately report to their designated station and conduct their assigned duties and responsibilities. There may be situations wherein the normal chain of command (i.e. Child Welfare Services Manager, Deputy Director, Director). In those situations, personnel shall follow the directives of Managers and/or Deputy Directors for other divisions of the Agency.
 - b. In the event personnel are unable to contact their regularly assigned Program Manager, they shall immediately contact or proceed to a Red Cross shelter to check in for assignments.
 - c. If personnel are unsure of what to do or whether to check in, they should listen to local news broadcasts, Emergency Broadcast Station announcements and/or other media to determine the nature of the emergency.
 - d. Unless otherwise directed, all personnel are required to work their regularly scheduled work calendar and hours.
2. During or after a disaster, the status of children under the Agency's care will be determined as follows:
 - a. If possible, during normal working hours, all CPS personnel with an assigned caseload will contact the children on their assigned caseloads via telephone and/or personal home visits. The information needed (i.e. caretaker's name, address and telephone number for each child) is located in each case file. If the assigned CPS SSW is not available, the OD or another assigned CPS SSW shall make the contacts. Caseload coverage shall be ensured by each CPS Supervisor, Program Manager or Deputy Director, in said order. Social Service Assistants may be assigned to help contact all of the children. Contacts must also be done on behalf of all children placed via the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and children residing in Kings County whereby courtesy supervision services are being provided.

- b. In the event other counties request courtesy safety home visits on behalf of their dependents, CPS personnel shall honor those requests only if Kings County's dependents have been checked on first.
 - c. The Social Services Office Supervisor shall maintain a comprehensive list of all children under the care, custody and control of the Agency on a monthly basis utilizing a computer-generated report from Business Objects. This list shall be kept in the Social Services Office Supervisor's office, labeled, "ER Disaster Child Contact Roster." This list can be accessed in the event of an emergency wherein CPS personnel are not available and/or CPS is operating on a skeleton crew or after normal working hours. In that event, whomever is directed to be responsible for making the contacts will have an up to date list to utilize.
 - d. All attempted and completed contacts will be entered into CWS/CMS as soon as reasonably possible and in accordance with data entry procedures. Hand written notes shall be kept on every contact until the data can be entered into CWS/CMS. The following information, at minimum, shall be kept: child's name, caretaker's name, who the SSW spoke to (SSW must speak to the caretaker, child or approved secondary caretakers), information about the child's health, safety and welfare, the child's location throughout the disaster and any services the child may require. If required, all other documents or forms must be filled out by hand.
3. During or after a disaster, services shall be provided to children under the Agency's care as follows:
- a. Active efforts to follow all Court Orders made prior to the disaster will be made. CPS personnel will require the approval of management to act in opposition to an existing Court Order and a Court Report will be filed as soon as possible explaining why the applicable Court Order could not be followed.
 - b. For any situation wherein emergency services on behalf of a child must be acquired (i.e. surgery, blood transfusion/testing, medical care), CPS personnel shall seek guidance from Supervisors and/or Managers prior to giving consent for the procedures. Upon direction, CPS personnel may provide written consent for the emergency procedure. These situations must present a life threatening condition.
 - c. For non-life threatening emergencies, which may become life threatening and require consents above those typically reserved for caretakers and parents, CPS personnel must make every reasonable effort to obtain a Court Order for care. If one cannot be reasonably obtained, CPS personnel may approve the procedures in writing after consulting with a Supervisor and/or Manager.
 - d. All other rights given to caretakers and parents by Statute also will apply during a disaster situation.

- e. If a child has died, CPS personnel shall follow the policies and procedures in relation to child deaths as soon as reasonably possible.
 - f. If the child and/or caretaker needs any other services (i.e. transportation, food, shelter, clothing, crisis counseling, water), CPS personnel shall make every reasonable effort to acquire the services via community-based providers and/or emergency shelters.
 - g. CPS personnel shall document all efforts, services, contacts and the results in CWS/CMS when reasonably possible, regardless of which child or family it is they come into contact with. Hand written notes shall be kept until it is possible to enter the data. Any required documents or forms must be filled out by hand, if necessary.
4. The after-hours policies and procedures shall be followed during and after a disaster to ensure the Agency meets its mandatory 24 hour emergency response requirements. The Emergency Response Supervisor shall coordinate after-hours emergency response coverage to ensure staff and Supervisors are on call as scheduled.
- a. All information shall be entered on documents and forms by hand if CWS/CMS is not available. Information shall be entered into CWS/CMS as soon as reasonably possible.
 - b. In the event the disaster results in a necessity for CPS personnel to be stationed at emergency shelters to handle intake and emergency response duties, staff shall be assigned to provide those services in a rotating manner. Otherwise, the services can be provided via the normal after-hours call in procedures.
5. Emergency Response services to the public shall continue during and after a disaster. Child abuse and neglect investigations shall be conducted in accordance with regulations, legislation and Agency policies and procedures active prior to the disaster. CPS personnel shall place children into protective custody as necessary and locate foster care placements on behalf of those children. Emergency relative and NREFM home approvals shall be done in accordance with Agency P&P during and after a disaster.
- a. CPS personnel shall continue searching for placement on behalf of detained children until safe, suitable and approved/licensed placements are found and made. During the placement search, CPS personnel (including SSAs) shall be assigned to rotating shifts for the care and supervision of detained children. The care and supervision site may be in a designated shelter or other facility that is safe and has food, water and proper sanitation for the children.
 - b. Welfare and Institutions Code Petitions and Reports must be prepared and filed within statutory guidelines during and after a disaster in the event the Court system is functioning. The Agency is still held to statutory requirements for the detention of children if Court days are being counted in the County. All other legal and civil rights accorded to children and their families will also continue to apply during or

after a disaster; therefore, CPS personnel will make active efforts to comply with those regulations.

6. CPS personnel shall assist “unaccompanied minors” resulting from the disaster. These children may be delivered to CPS personnel, sent to emergency shelters and/or must be responded to by CPS personnel in other areas of the County. CPS personnel shall make every effort to locate the children’s parents, legal guardians and/or responsible relatives to release the children to during or after the disaster in accordance with the Welfare and Institutions Code and Agency policies and procedures.
 - a. If children can be released safely, all efforts, services and contacts shall be entered into CWS/CMS as a referral and closed appropriately. Hand written notes, documents and forms shall be completed if CWS/CMS is not available and the information shall be entered as soon as possible when CWS/CMS becomes available.
 - b. If children cannot be safely released or no one fitting the required caretaker description in WIC can be located on behalf of the child, CPS personnel shall treat the referral as a detention pursuant to WIC Section 300(g).